

1922

May 12 - June 2

# EXERCISE BOOK

No 21

Wednesday May 22 1922  
Dublin

To D I S

I want to give a full account of Belfast. It was really too remarkable and too horrid not to be recorded. If I do not record and if the country settles we shall in quite a short time be unable to believe that I saw such dreadful things.

On Monday May 22 I went down to the bank and got there about 11 30 I got a fright going down because outside the chapel that one passes in Donegal Street stood a hearse, and I was afraid of what might happen at the funeral. However I got all right to the bank. I said to Mr Harding ( the manager ) " I want to go to Botanic Avenue Will that be all right ? " " Oh yes that side is quite quiet " so to Botanic Avenue, and to the abode of Mr Cooke I went. The gentleman was not at home. I waited for a while till past one, then I left three books on the hall table, and a note to say that I left them on the chance of his liking them, and I came away. As I came

Rev Cooke  
Rector of  
All Saints  
Belfast.

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into the little front garden that sat Mrs and Miss Cooke. We began to speak to one another, and gradually I discovered that Mrs Cooke was nearly beside herself. She kept reviling the R Cs in a demented sort of way. Her daughter tried to calm her down, and it was rather unexpected, because he is a peculiarly tolerant man. But as she talked I perceived that she was very much upset indeed, not talking out of her real mind, but kind of wild panic words, and gradually it all came out, a bit here and a bit there. There is a Mr Twadell ( you put the accent on the last syllable ) and he was an M P in the Northern Parliament. He used to come to All Saint's because he lived in the parish, then he moved his house, and he came quite a walk~~ing~~ still to All Saint's because he loved Mr Cooke so much. So that very morning <sup>(May 22)</sup> at half past ten he was shot dead in the street , outside his place of business. Mrs Cook had just heard it from people whom she trusted, and indeed it was quite true. She had spent the

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morning in town, and she had been so dreadfully frightened while she was doing her shopping, she heard that a land mine had been discovered, and that was quite true too. It was in a man-hole in a sewer in Arthur Street quite near Royal Avenue and was timed to go off at 2 p m. But it was ~~not~~ found in the morning. When Mrs Cooke heard that she fled home very much alarmed, and was there greeted with the news about Mr Twadell. Mr Cooke went out at ten. I said I had left three books for him, and Mrs Cooke looked so wistfully at the three remaining ones that I left them all. She said they would distract his mind " when he comes in. If he ever comes in " As I have not heard of the rev. gentleman's failing to come in I feel no doubt that he did so in due time. Mrs C was sure he would go at once to Mrs Twadell because they were such great friends.

After that I became immersed in flitting.

All was ready on Wednesday morning, and on that day I departed from Feenavarna, and all was stor =

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ed in the attic at Feenish I spent Wednesday night at the Settlement.

The talk there was all about St Silas's. I It was not the church that was burned, it was not even the school. It was only the piano in the schoolroom, the one they had a bazaar to get, and paid £40 for a year ago. People came bringing blankets dipped in petroleum, and they threw them in and set them on fire. The piano is quite burned, but the school house is not really much injured. They will soon be able to use it again. They knew about the blankets because they found the remains of them. That happened on Tuesday night.

On Wednesday there was a great upset in town. Oh it was horrid. Nelly Gledstanes was obliged to crouch in a tram for ever so long. They were bombing the trams. Canon Browne has chartered a train to take 500 people for a day trip. He is unwilling to put it off. It will not be for a fortnight. There will not be many childr

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ren because the tickets are rather expensive.

It will be for older people and bigger children.

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6 K S      After all I came back here last night as I think I told you I was going to. The Carmody's could not have me at Lisburn so I just came along and glad I was to arrive. I am now going to set my mind seriously to getting somewhat rested before the next outburst here, which I suppose will not be so very long before it arrives.

I feel rather confused about the exact state of affairs here, but I think the point is that now Griffith and Collins have made up some sort of little agreement with de Valera, and are in London trying to see if L G will fall in with what they propose. It is difficult to keep track of all the details, because of course the real point is How far will anarchy go? Is there anywhere in these islands a power left which can interfere with the dissolution of society which is taking place?

In Belfast there seem to me to be two forces working. De Valera is apparently really setting the members of the I R A on to commit outrages,

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of various kinds, and at the same time Sir James Criag, like his predecessors in office, is taking the wrong course at every turn. I think probably the quite immediate cause of the state of the city is the disbanding of the R I C in ~~Mar~~ March last., You say it is curious what makes them run amock. But I believe that in any large city if you disband the police you make the degenerates run amock, and others take the infection from the degenerates. Immediately on the disbandment the streets were put in charge of the "specials". There was ~~al~~ always a special on duty in Everton Street. Yesterday I got talking to him. He looked three or four and twenty, and he wore a very ~~shab~~ shabby policeman's cap, and a long rain coat evidently intended to conceal the fact that he was not in uniform. I had observed him several times lounging in the door of Mulhern's public, with a picture paper, the Daily Sketch, or the like of that. Also I had to catch a moment to speak to him when he was neither flirting with a lively girl, nor chatting with a boy in mufti.



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At last I did, and I asked him was he a special ?  
Yes he belonged to the B division. A B and C indicate the amount of training received, less as you go down the alphabet. Did he belong to the Royal Ulster Constabulary ? I e the force that is being organised now ? No , but a lot of our fellows ~~mis~~ might likely be put into it . Then he was not a real policeman ? Well no, he was a special, just to put down all this trouble. So I wagged my head and said how sorry I was that the specials had so little success " Oh we are doing our best " " But you have not settled the town " Then later in the day I passed him, and a chum in mufti was handing him a case of cigarettes. I said " Is that allowed " ? Both looked very uneasy and the friend said " Not formerly, but now the police smoke in England and Scotland " " On patrol ? " " Oh yes " I said <sup>something</sup> about our own old R I C, who did not smoke on patrol, and who kept the roads safe. I cannot exactly remember how I brought it in , for the boys looked decidedly cross, and I thought perhaps

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I was silly, and ended my remark, " But times are changed, and I wish they were changing for the better " whereat the two said " They are changing for the worse " So we parted good friends

But imagine putting the public safety in the hands of men to whom one talks like that!. The cigarette went out of sight while I was there, I am sure it was wrong really but imagine leaving it to me to point out the fact. Do you ever see policemen smoke, and read picture papers on their patrols in London? Sometimes I see the specials in armed motors smoking, you see the white cigarette quite plainly, and it looks hateful amongst the guns. So flippant, and disrespectful of the whole situation.

I think a well drilled police acts in two ways. Have I suggested this before? They check these manias in crowds, because being properly taught they are immune themselves. I heard a man once running on to a street meeting, and he was talking great rubbish which I do not now remember,

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and part of it was scoffing at the police  
" Much use they are Look at those fellows now  
standing along there, like so many monkeys along  
the perch " And I did look and there stood the  
police in a little row, and whether they heard  
themselves called " monkeys" , or whether they  
did not it was all the same. Nothing that a silly  
street spouter called them mattered to them They  
looked so serene that they made the man who abused  
them look a fool. But it is quite different with  
these men. The least bit of criticism , and Sir  
James and all take it up so seriously , and it is  
" unheard of provocation " and " intolerable ~~insu~~  
insult " and really if they do lose their heads  
and fire on the crowd how can you be surprised ?

But all the same I am sure there is cons-  
piracy against the Northern Government. I am sure  
people on the continent, or elsewhere, are trying  
to make government impossible, and it is not, such  
a very difficult thing to do under the circumst-  
ances.

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It all seems less dangerous than one might think. ~~One~~<sup>He</sup> gets oddly used to it

To hear that Miss Gledstones had to come up from town on her knees in the trams, or that Miss Cruikshank is vexed because the new piano is burnt at St Silas's, that they have just paid £40 for, or that Mrs Musson was waked three times in the night by the ~~fiting~~, does not seem out of the common, and it seems quite natural that ~~after~~ after three or four hours you hear of a ~~fresh~~ fresh murder, or a fresh incendiary fire. When you meet at dinner, and again at tea, you expect that someone will contribute a fresh horror and they generally do. In a way you ~~get~~ get to wish for it because one nail knocks out another, and whenever the horrors cease there will be a most awful feeling of collapse.

The more intelligent cottage people all have the same cry, "there is no government ~~anywhere~~ anywhere" It is frightful to hear them.

Miss Hartford is the present head of the

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settlement. She says, and perhaps she is right, that she thinks it is only now that Belfast realizes that there is no government to be looked for from London. Of course Dublin found that out some months ago. The cottage people want martial law, and one feels that there can be only one reason for not having it. It seems that Sir James Craig could ask for it, or even the Lord Mayor of Belfast, but someone has to ask, and then the imperial parliament is bound to give it. The form in which the objection is stated to me is " Sir James Craig is afraid that some would be offended " Why should " some " be offended ? It could only be possible if " some " had been condoning very irregular things indeed. I am much alarmed at this arresting of I R A members all over the six counties. It will provoke reprisals so called, and do no good. He ought to begin by suppressing those useless specials, and having martial law, till he has got together a police force, fit to be so called.

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I am surprised that if golden sunrise can be seen anywhere it should not be seen here. You may call these the convulsions which are ushering in the New Age, indeed some people do call them so, and begin with all sorts of fairy stories. If I did that for one place I would do it for all. D tells me she has found some newspaper which gives "a little more news, but all as black as a boot." And, oh, by the way nugget is to be had again, and lux. I trust that folly may be at an end.

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To D I S            Do you remember a girl in Belfast  
that we called Goldilocks ? Her real name was Mary  
Turner, and she died after a long illness. X  
and Mrs Turner became great chums. So this is  
the letter that X received yesterday from Mrs  
Turner, in thanks for a parcel of old clothes.

Belfast May 28 1922

Dear friend    Just a few lines to let you know  
that I received the parcel alright and I return  
you sincere thanks for it. I had to go to the  
general post office for it. They left word for me  
last week that a parcel was there for me. I was  
sorry to hear that you have got the cold but I  
hope that it is better. I have got the cold and  
so has Nellie I dont get my clothes off at night  
we are getting it very hard we had a mind to go  
up to Dublin I expect to get chased any night.  
They are bombing us out of it. I am glad to hear  
that you are going on your holidays there is no  
place here now. Dear friend I am not able to write  
any more . The family join with me in sending the  
their kind love to you

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I remain your friend till death Mrs Turner I  
dont know when I will hear from you again as I  
dont know where I will be all the neighbours in  
the street has gone to England and Scotland anyone  
that can get away is going that is them that has  
the money ~~No~~more God be with you If I <sup>E</sup> get to  
Dublin I will see you

I have introduced some stops as you see, the origi-  
nal runs straight on without punctuation. That  
woman had both her grown up sons in the war, and  
her husband till he was discharged as medically  
unfit. The youngest, ~~Pa dd~~ Paddy only did not go  
beca~~u~~se he was about sixteen when the war ended  
So that is that.



W24

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To K S I read Winston Churchill's speech last night every word. It is a queer production. The tone is moderate, you might almost say conciliating, and yet the whole thing is based on such a totally wrong view of all the facts of the case, that one can only feel it dangerous in the highest degree. That dreadful Sir Henry Wilson, who is such an "agent provocateur" when he is in Belfast, was quite real by comparison. Sir H W said "How can you expect untrained inexperienced men to govern without either an army or a police force?" and how can you? Mr Churchill says "we" have withdrawn "our" army, and disbanded "our" police. He seems to think that was a very meritorious thing to do. Had I been present I felt I would have said to him "Excuse me Sir, but it is my police you have disbanded. And I do not thank you for, doing so" I am sure he is in some faddy dream. He is not really clear in his own mind as to what the relations of England ~~xxx~~ ~~xx~~ ~~what they have been~~ to Ireland are, or what they have been.

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He really thinks that to call Ireland " another country " , and to have its questions answered by him as colonial secretary, makes it into a colony , or a dominion, or something of that sort. He does not see that use what words you please you have to reckon with the fact that the R I C was a force recruited in Ireland, I suppose ~~it~~ largely paid for in Ireland, and trusted by the Irish of all sorts and conditions, even more than the regular army was trusted, which is saying a good deal. Now that is a fact, and anyone whom knows anything about Ireland at all, could tell Mr Churchill so, but it is the kind of fact he does not want.

The real internal state of Ireland, as it is, and as it has been, during this generation is of no interest to him, or apparently to anyone else. Their minds seem to be filled with questions of theory , and more especially with questions of who can and who cannot, produce a parliamentary majority. They remind me of schoolboys in a

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debating society. One knows how quite irresons-  
ible people of 18 or 19 run on with their theories  
" Oh there should be a plebiscite, there should  
be a two thirds majority, no one should take  
office who is over 32 etc etc " a whole string  
of quite crude theories that have a basis of good  
intention, and do no harm while they belong to  
quite powerless people. Mr Churchill is like ~~th~~  
that. He speaks as if Ireland were a theory ,  
as if the Irish would, and must, act according to  
certain consistent rules in order to fit into  
that theory. But what people ever do go according  
to those rules ? Is that not what the schoolboy  
finds out at college, or wherever he happens to  
grow up ? Does not any reasonable boy discover  
that people are alive ? That they do all sorts  
of unaccountable things, that they are inconsis-  
tent , do not mean all they say, or say by any  
manner of means all that they mean ? Is it not  
the art of government to join the present to the  
past ? There is no such thing in politics as

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" tabula rasa " You cannot begin to speak about Ireland as if it had been created on the 6th December last , and it is vainer than vain to expect Ireland, or any other country to pursue one steady course , confirming its act and its words by one another People never do that.

But I suppose civil war declared and public is now very near. It appears to be Mr Churcill's only resource. There are crowds of soldiers in ~~th~~ the Phoenix. I saw them last Saturday

It was a very fine day and the may coming out in Merrion square So after tea I thought I should like a walk, and I took the tram to Parkgate<sup>te</sup> Street. And on the way I read in the evening ~~pape~~ papers that people had got with them that a soldier , may be it was two I am not sure, but certainly one had been shot dead that very~~y~~ morning on College Green. I felt rather appalled but resolved to go on. I walked from Parkgate Street, and it is an hour's walk across the Phoenix from there to where the hawthorn is. You go very nearly through the whole Park.

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When I got to the Lodge what did I see down away to the left ~~7~~ but tents, ever so many tents, and soldiers in karkhi to correspond, any number of soldiers, crowds of them. I am always uneasy in their neighbourhood, but there was no ~~escape~~ escape, the place was pervaded with them. / But I went on and found the thorn trees, and they were not yet in blossom, so I may go again tomorrow or I may not. If I do go I will take the steam tram to Clonsilla, the far end of the Phoenix, and not go near the camp. But those are the soldiers of which Mr Churchill spoke. It seems they are to be withdrawn, and only this morning I saw them going along in a sort of van, and pointing their rifles at us as last year. But oh dear me they have only got such horrid old cars now to go about ~~it~~ in. All the good cars were given to the Free State, or sold. There was an adv. I saw very often, some man who had " army Fords for sale " So now these people in the camp have only very wretched old things. Sort of carts for moving luggage, or the like of that. But they pointed their rifles &

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at us none the less.

Do you see that the reports now tell us " there is no change on the Belleek sector of the county Fermanagh " and " no fighting on the Strabane- Lifford frontier yesterday " though " On Wednesday ~~morning~~ evening a horse came into the zone of fire and was shot dead " You know it is civil war to a small extent now .

There is one point where I do not at all agree with Mr Churchill. He goes on saying that all this trouble is much more discreditable to Ireland than to England, and will bring much greater misfortune this side the channel than that. But even if we set aside the important part of the population which is equally concerned about the two islands, you for instance, and many more whom it would be wearisome to name, even apart from those I can imagine nothing more inconvenient for the Imperial Parliament than to stand there before the world fighting a State which it brought into being, and supplied with war material

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in great abundance, within six months.

I am going on Monday to talk to the bank about my overdraft. When I left Belfast I was planning to pay it off gradually out of income. But I am wondering had I not better pay it off at once out of capital. I think debt might be so very difficult if it became practically impossible ~~ble~~ to sell capital, and I cannot believe that British credit can stand at all where it did. Anyway I will have a talk with the manager here and take his opinion. You know if I have to sell out I do not mind at all It would have poisoned my life if I had felt that I had left one stone unturned in Belfast. I feel now that I held on to the work there up to the very last moment and beyond it. I only left Feenavarna when it became useless. My Romans are talking about leaving. Refugees arrive here daily, and quite likely some of mine may be among them. But I do feel that if I sell out it is no more than Fundator Noster always has to do. All people who start work spend

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their own money upon it, and it gives me as I say real relief that I held out to the very end. But you see this matter makes me feel a very practical interest in the credit of the Empire i e in the money value of the war loan. The bank will know what to advise, but I am sure that all this upset here must be weakening the Empire, and must also be a sign that the Empire is very ~~weak~~ weak. It is folly to talk of it as an Irish affair in which England is not so very much concerned. It is part of the unreality of which I complain.

In all this I see one grain of comfort You will I daresay have seen a statement issued by the Irish Registration Bureau ( Compensation Claims Committee ) It appears to be the body ~~whic~~ which deals with refugees from Ireland. It gives an account of the people who come to it and then it ~~it~~ says .... combined with this move~~m~~ ment , and probably to some extent controlled by it is the anti-capitalist influence of the Third International" It is a real relief to me to see



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that in print. It is that anti-capitalist Third International that is making all the trouble in Belfast. I know it. I cannot quite tell you how I know it but I do. Why should the Irish be suddenly seized with this antipathy to the British empire which they have worked so hard to help to carry on? Of course there is plenty to curse in the Empire half in fun, half in party spirit, but why attack it? Why does de Valera attack it? My idea is that the Third International is paying him. And its policy is quite simple, it hates the Empire because it hates capital. Up to the day before yesterday we heard for some days, ~~that~~ three or four perhaps, that Belfast was quieting. Then two specials were shot, just murdered with no provocation given. Then the fat was in the ~~fire~~ fire again, and since Wednesday (the day before yesterday) it is the worst turn they have had ~~yet~~ yet.

Now to whose interest is it to upset things like that? Obviously to no one's in ~~Ireland~~ Ireland. The street fighting in Belfast~~?~~ does an

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enormous amount of harm, and no good to any human being in Belfast, or in Ireland. But it does weaken the Empire, it may be taken as weakening capital. That does seem to me an adequate motive for keeping up the stir, and I believe it has been the real motive all the way along. I know very little about the Third International, but I understand that it is an international association of extreme socialists and revolutionaries, and to such I can imagine that the disturbances in any part of Ireland are welcome. Extreme socialism is not very popular in this country, and so all ancient feuds and grievances are called to life, to excite and madden a nation which is left without either soldiers or police to protect it. And I am heartily glad that this Bureau in London should put that into words.

I have a great scheme for starting a library of historical novels, but am only going to embark on that if I get a certain amount of support.

This is a very gorgeous season for blossom, being so late. The People's Garden in Phoenix Park nearly blinds you, the tulips are so brilliant

1922

